In the annual message of December, 1886, Mr. Cleveland reiterated his hearty approval of civil-service reform, but he put a fly into the ointment when he spoke of the harm done to the cause by "the misguided zeal of impracticable friends." This public rebuke, greeted as it was with unrestrained merriment by the spoilsmen, confirmed the opinion of the extreme reformers that they had nothing more to hope for from the administration. At the request and urging of many of them and in accordance with his own feeling, Mr. Schurz, December 15, addressed to the President an epistolary essay which expressed without any reserve whatever the feelings of the writer. It was cast in the form of a demonstration that unless Mr. Cleveland changed his attitude toward the aims of the Independents, he could not be politically saved; but there was manifested little hope that the change would come, and hence the letter was more like a reproachful farewell. The President was informed that the Independents had lost or were fast losing all their faith in the sincerity of his professions. "Until recently . . . the worst things laid to your charge were construed as mere errors of judgment, and perhaps occasionally a certain stubbornness of temper in sticking to an error once committed. But . . . this confiding belief has been seriously shaken. . . . There is a condition of public confidence under which all a man does

is construed favorably, and there is another under which all is construed unfavorably. You have had all the advantages of the first. If I am not mistaken you ar£ now standing on the dividing line between the two." From a review of the weak points that had developed in the administration, particularly in connection with the Attorney-General and the Secretary of the,Navy, Mr. Schurz derived the conclusion that if an election were at hand the President would have no chance of